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MEMOIR
OF
MAJOR-GENERAL CRAUFURD.

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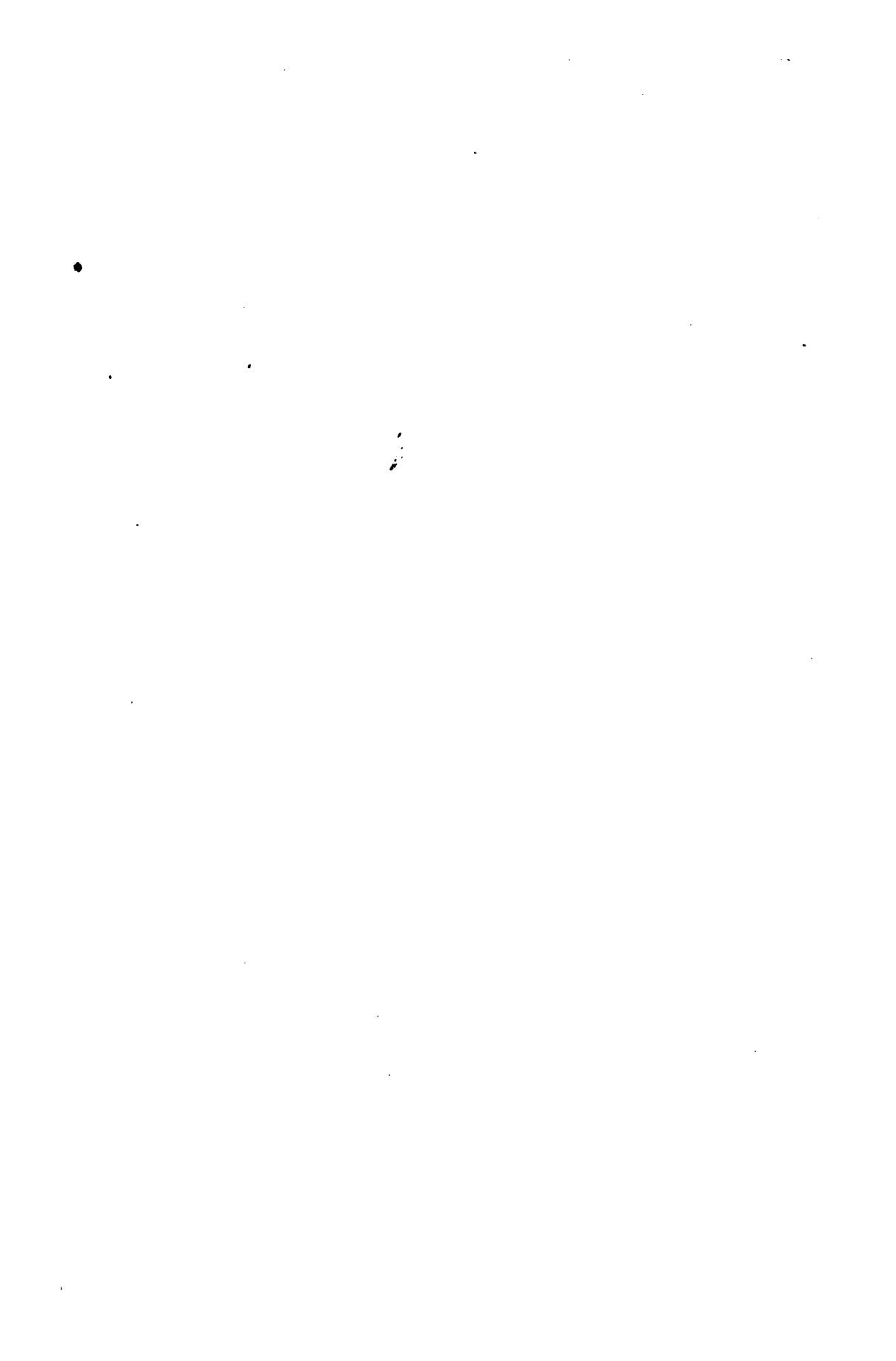
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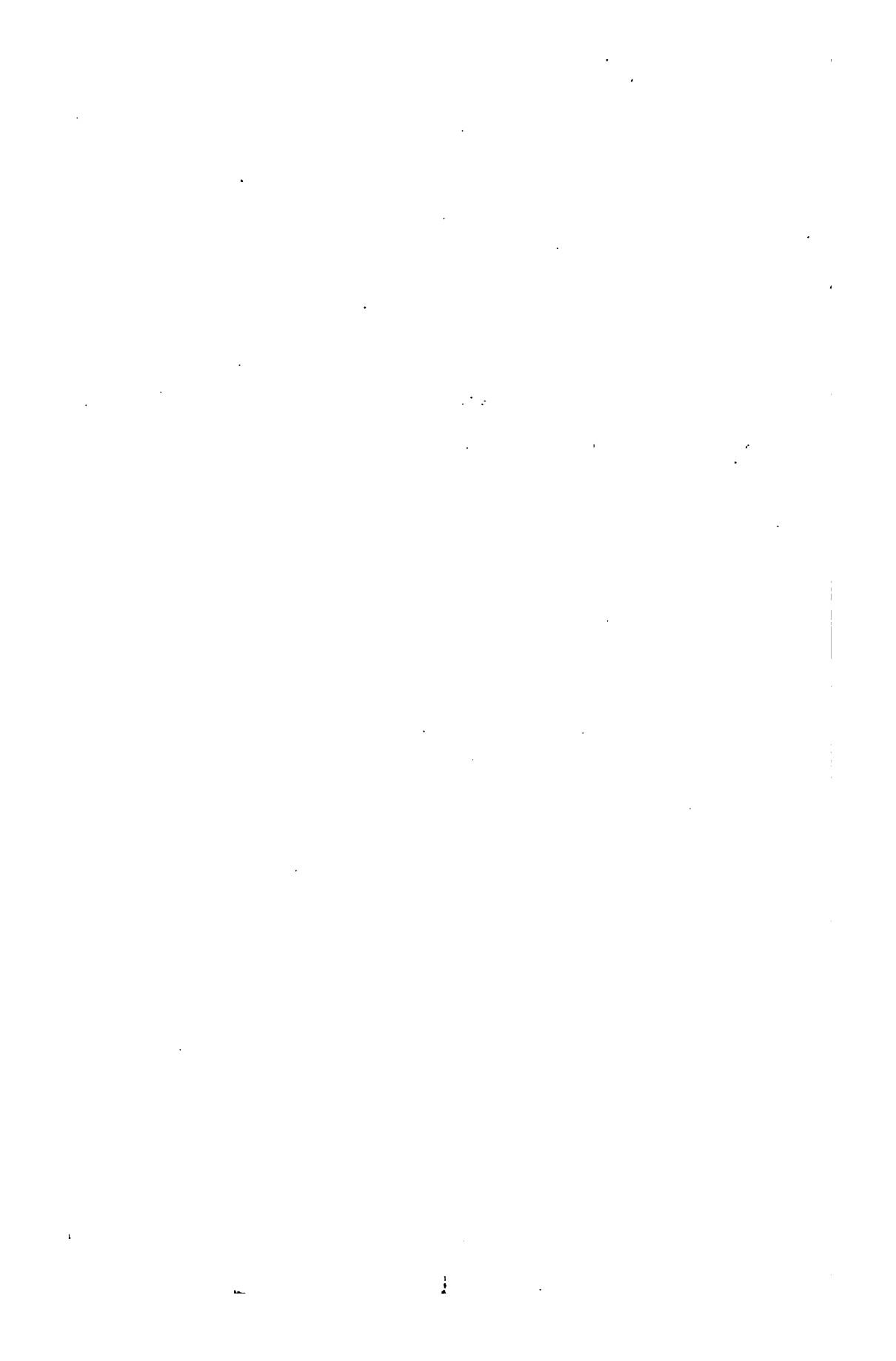
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A MEMOIR
OF THE LATE
MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT CRAUFURD
REPRINTED FROM THE MILITARY PANORAMA
OF OCTOBER 1812

WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS FUNERAL
BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SUBALTERN"

REPRINTED FROM "THE GEM" OF 1829

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A M E M O I R

OF THE LATE

MAJOR-GEN. ROBERT CRAUFURD.

THE task of a biographer is rendered highly grateful and pleasing to his feelings, when he reviews the conduct of a departed soldier, whose life has been spent with glory in his country's cause ; and such are our sensations in recording the services of the late Major-General Robert Craufurd. This gallant and distinguished officer entered the army in the year 1779, at the early age of fifteen, and served four years as a subaltern, in the 25th regiment of foot. His early genius, firmness, candour, and daring spirit, obtained the patronage and friendship of his colonel, Sir Charles Stewart,† which were continued to him, in consequence of the perseverance he

† Brother to the late Lord Bute.

evinced in the attainment of a thorough knowledge of the different branches of military science. Having been promoted to a company, when nineteen, he attended the reviews at Potsdam, and visited the principal theatres of war on the continent, where he devoted his time to the prosecution of military studies, and pursued them with such close application and unremitting ardour, as to become inferior to no officer in Europe in military tactics, or less deeply read in military history.

On his return from the continent, Captain Craufurd became desirous of some active employment on foreign service; we consequently find him, immediately after, employed in India, under Lord Cornwallis. Here he served two campaigns, commanding the 75th regiment, as eldest captain, and distinguished himself wherever an occasion offered. On returning to England, in 1794, Colonel, now Lieutenant-General, Charles Craufurd, who was employed by the British Government on a military mission to the Austrian armies, expressed a wish for the assistance of his brother; and they served together during the campaigns of 1795, 1796, and 1797. Lieutenant-General Charles Craufurd being se-

verely wounded, this gallant officer had the superintendence of the mission entrusted to him ; in the discharge of which, a further occasion was afforded for the exercise of those splendid talents and literary abilities with which nature had endowed him, and which he had so richly cultivated.

In 1798, an invasion of Ireland being apprehended, he was appointed Deputy Quarter-Master-General of that country ; and on the attempt made by Humbolt, the extensive knowledge Lieutenant-Colonel Craufurd displayed, obtained from his former commander, Lord Cornwallis, and also from Lord Lake, the warmest marks of approbation, as expressed in their accounts to government, viz. "*Of Lieutenant-Colonel Craufurd's zeal, spirit, and abilities, too much cannot be said;*" and all Ireland joined in his praises. In 1799, he was again employed on a military mission to the Austrian armies in Switzerland, where he remained until the expedition to Holland, under the command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, when Lieutenant-Colonel Craufurd was appointed Deputy Quarter-Master-General, and directed to proceed to that country. Throughout that unfortunate

campaign, he displayed a continued series of ability and military skill, which met with the highest approbation of his illustrious commander.

In 1807, Brigadier-General Craufurd served under Lieutenant-General Whitelocke, in the expedition against Buenos Ayres, and commanded the light brigade which formed the advanced guard of the army, consisting of eight companies of light infantry, a detachment of recruits, about seventy of the 71st regiment, and eight companies of the 95th, or Rifle Corps. In this disastrous expedition, no officer was more distinguished than General Craufurd, whose opinion it was, that, if the main body of the army had been in a situation to support his advanced corps, which, on the 2nd of July, repulsed the enemy, taking twelve pieces of artillery, and pursued them to the entrance of Buenos Ayres, the town would have been carried with ease. In the subsequent operations of that army, the fortitude and perseverance of General Craufurd were particularly conspicuous. His division was the first to enter the town, and a large portion of them fell victims to the fury of the inhabitants, who, from their houses, assailed

the British troops, in a manner which afforded little opportunity of retaliation, or even of defence.

In October, 1808, Major-General Craufurd accompanied the expedition from Falmouth, under Sir David Baird, and commanded the light division of that army. In the advance and retreat of those troops, he lost no opportunity of exerting himself, where ability or courage could be exercised. On the 29th of July, the day after the battle of Talavera, he joined the army of Lord Wellington, having made an extraordinary march of twelve Spanish leagues, nearly fifty miles, in the short space of twenty-four hours.

The several actions in which Major-General Craufurd has been since engaged, have served to increase his reputation both for skill and courage. How fully we are warranted in making this assertion, a reference to the *Gazettes* of Lord Wellington will readily prove. After the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, the light division of the combined army, under Brigadier-General Craufurd, consisting of the first battalions of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th regiments; detachments of the 14th and 16th Light Dragoons, 1st Hussars, King's German Legion;

Captain Ross's troop of Horse Artillery ; and 1st and 3rd Portuguese Caçadores, light infantry, amounting, in the whole, to about four thousand infantry, and six hundred cavalry, was attacked, in its position near Almeida, by a corps of the enemy, greatly superior in numbers with respect to infantry and artillery, and supported by a body of from three to four thousand cavalry. From Marshal Massena's official dispatch, containing a statement of the force to which General Craufurd was opposed, on this occasion, it appears, that the cavalry consisted of five regiments, which are generally from six to seven hundred each ; and that the whole of the infantry of Marshal Ney's corps was present, with the exception of one regiment. The infantry of this corps, according to the intercepted official returns, amounted, at that time, to upwards of twenty-two thousand effective men. The force, therefore, with which Marshals Massena and Ney advanced to attack the light division, on the morning of the 24th of July, 1810, amounted to twenty thousand infantry, and from three to four thousand cavalry. After a most gallant defence of his post, General Craufurd withdrew the troops through the defiles and

winding paths, one of the most difficult operations in war, to the bridge across the Coa ; which the enemy made three fruitless attempts to pass, in each of which he was repulsed with considerable loss.

Subsequently, in the battle of Busaco, and at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo, Major-General Craufurd reared for himself a monument of military fame. On the latter occasion, his division attacked the strong works on the hill of St. Francisco, which were taken by storm in a very short time. The success of this operation enabled the British to break ground within six hundred yards of Ciudad Rodrigo. In the general attack, which followed on the 19th of January, 1812, Major-General Craufurd commanded the fourth column, which comprised the 43rd, 52nd, and part of the 95th regiments. This division attacked the breaches on the left, in front of the suburbs of Ciudad Rodrigo, and covered the left of the attack of the principal breach by the troops of the third division, under that distinguished officer, the late Major-General Mackinnon. The alacrity with which General Craufurd, and the other generals of brigades, led their troops to the attack, caused the

surrender of the place within half an hour from the commencement of the storm. While leading his division, and foremost in the attack, General Craufurd received a severe and fatal wound, which terminated his gallant career on the 24th,—a wound, which, in the words of Lord Wellington, “*deprived his Majesty of the services, and himself of the assistance of an officer of tried talents and experience, who was an ornament to his profession, and was calculated to render the most important services to his country.*”

The character drawn of this departed hero by the Commander-in-chief, might render it almost useless to add any further comments; but some description of so distinguished an officer’s private character will not prove unacceptable to the army, and be an act of justice to his family. In his person, General Craufurd was below the middle size, but his air was commanding, and the animated expression of his countenance denoted the energetic qualities of his mind. As a husband, a parent, a brother, friend, and companion, General Craufurd’s loss is irreparable. The extent of his information rendered his society not only agreeable, but instructive, and obtained him

the esteem of all who had the honour of his acquaintance. The diligence and regularity which he always exhibited in the performance of his military duties, made him desirous of producing like qualities in those under his command ; and he proved himself the soldier's true friend in strictly enforcing military discipline, while he sedulously administered to their personal comforts. Of such a man, although his military talents, during a service of thirty-two years, were too exalted to allow his memory to fall into oblivion, it is necessary that some memorial should be recorded ; and we hope this attempt may be considered a tribute of justice, admiration, and respect to his extraordinary merit.

The highest military honours were paid to the remains of General Craufurd. The Commander-in-chief, with all the Staff, the British, Portuguese, and Spanish troops engaged at Ciudad Rodrigo, attended to pay their last offices to him whose actions had so often been the theme of their praise. To the breach where he had so nobly fought, and where he received the fatal wound, his body was supported by the soldiers of his division, and consigned, in the presence of thousands, to an

honourable grave. General Stewart was chief mourner, attended by Captain William Campbell, Lieutenant Hood of the 52nd regiment, and Lieutenant Shawe of the 43rd, Aide-de-camps to General Craufurd.

From the Morning Chronicle of February, 1812.

MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT CRAUFURD.

THE last letters from our army in Portugal mention the death of this invaluable officer, of the wound he received, when leading on the light division of Lord Wellington's army, in the most gallant and able manner, to the storm of Ciudad Rodrigo. At the time he was wounded, he was considerably advanced before his division, animating them to storm the breach. He had commanded the light division during several campaigns, with the greatest ability and distinction, and his loss is as universally and as deeply lamented by the army, as he was universally esteemed and beloved, and held in the highest consideration. He was an officer of first-rate talents, profoundly versed in every branch of the military

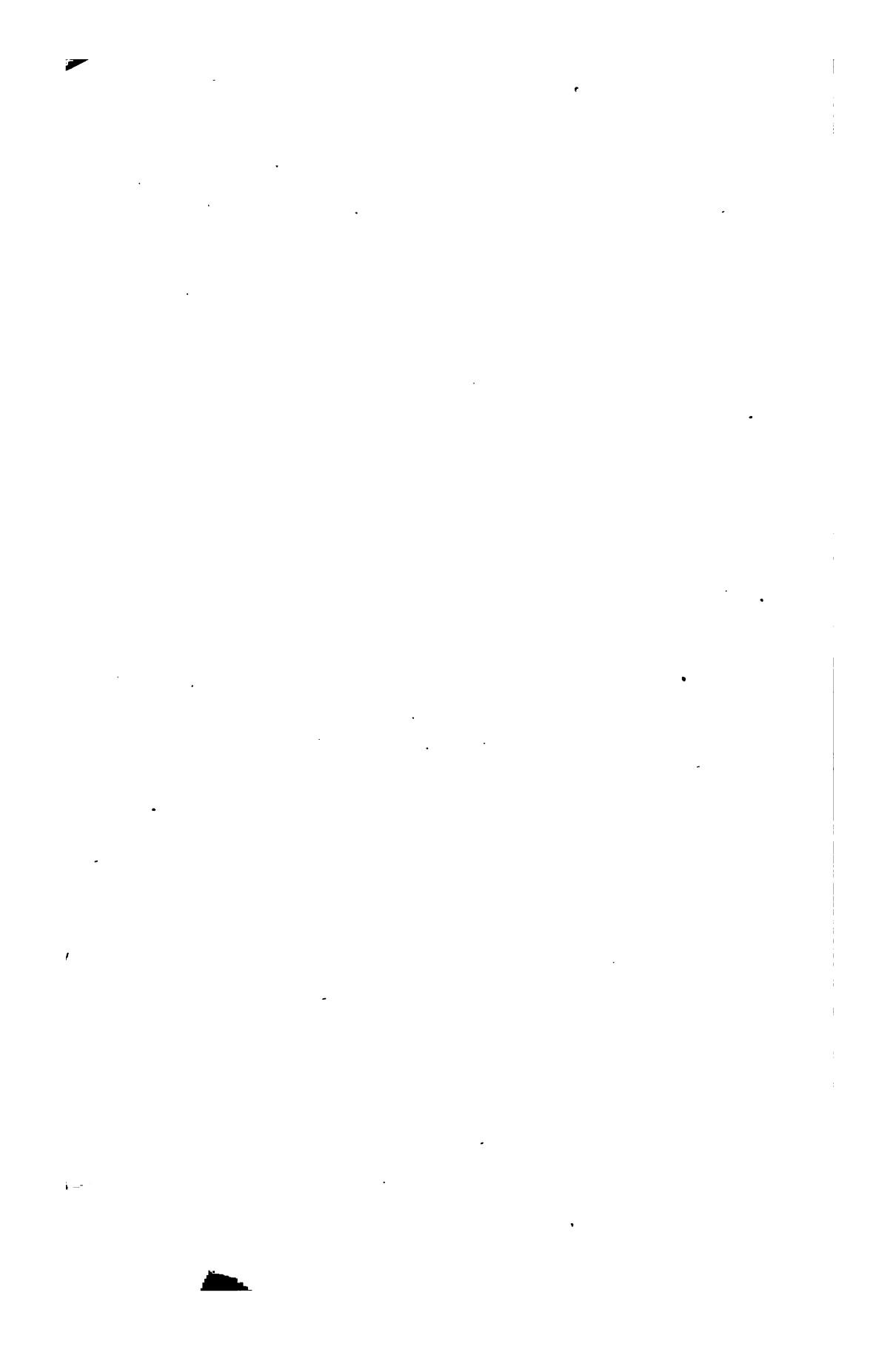
science: of the most ardent zeal, and truly heroic courage; and he enjoyed the advantage of very great experience. During the long period of thirty-three years, he had devoted himself to the service of his country, in the most indefatigable manner, quite regardless of his own comfort, convenience, and safety; but sedulously attentive to the comfort and convenience of his troops, as far as circumstances would permit. They always looked up to him with the utmost confidence and attachment. There cannot be a stronger proof of the regard the light division bore him, than the following circumstance:—Upon his return to Portugal last spring, he joined his division when the army was drawn up to receive Massena's attack at Fuentes d'Honor, and as soon as he appeared at their head, the whole division gave him three cheers in presence of the enemy. He served under all the first characters in our army, and they had all the highest sense of his great merits, none more so than our present illustrious Commander-in-chief. In private life he was one of the best and most estimable of men.

*From the Marquess of Londonderry's Narrative of the
Peninsular War.*

IT is scarcely necessary to add, that the loss of so many valuable lives was keenly felt, not only by private friends, but by the army in general; but among them all, there fell not one more universally, nor more justly lamented than Major-General Craufurd. He was an officer of whom the highest expectations had been formed, and who, on every occasion, found an opportunity to prove, that had his life been spared, the fondest hopes of his country would not have been disappointed; and he was a man, to know whom in his profession without admiring, was impossible. To me, his death occasioned that void which the removal of a sincere friend alone produces. From the moment of receiving his wound, he knew that all hope of recovery was idle; he lingered on for several days, and at last submitted to his fate with the magnanimity of a hero, and the resignation of a Christian. Poor Craufurd! whilst the memory of the brave and the skilful shall continue to be cherished by British

Major-General Robert Craufurd. 15

soldiers, thou wilt not be forgotten ; and the hand which scrawls this humble tribute to thy worth must be cold as thine own, ere the mind which dictates it shall cease to think of thee with affection and regret.





THE FUNERAL
OF
GENERAL CRAUFURD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SUBALTERN."

IT was on a cold rainy afternoon, towards the end of January, 1812, that the little party, of which I was at the head, arrived at the seat of war, and took up its abode in one of the detached cottages which, at that time, gave shelter to the light division. We had landed at Lisbon early in the month, where, upon one pretence or another, we were detained for nearly a fortnight; and we had traversed the country, between the capital and the frontier, by forced marches; but all our diligence failed in enabling us to reach head-quarters in sufficient time to take part in the toils and dangers to which our comrades were immediately exposed. The fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo, of the investment of which we had been

aware, was already reduced ; and the army was preparing, as men generally believed, to take up, once more, its line of the Coa. This was abundantly mortifying to an individual like myself, who had not yet seen a shot fired in earnest, and who, at the commencement of his career, experienced an extreme desire to signalize his valour ; but the accidents which stood in the way of this laudable inclination, were, as I well knew, unavoidable ; and I found comfort in the reflection, that, in all human probability, the period was not very remote, when other and no less favourable opportunities of winning a mural crown, would be presented.

I reached the hamlet in which our division was cantoned, just four days after the place had been carried by storm ; and the scene which met me there was one of no ordinary character. Crowded into a few scattered cottages, the soldiers, though destitute of all that the world calls comfort, appeared to enjoy admirable health and the highest spirits. As might be expected, the events of the late siege, and, above all, of its perilous conclusion, formed, in every circle, the sole topic of conversation ; whilst articles of plunder were

every where offered for sale, and bargains, the most absurd, and purchases the most grotesque, were every where in progress. Mingled with this general appearance of hilarity, however, might be discerned, here and there, signs of the deepest grief,—where individuals had lost a friend, and messes a favourite member; and, above all, the name of CRAUFURD was heard, coupled, as often as it was pronounced, with expressions of the most profound reverence and poignant sorrow. It is needless for me to remind you, that the gallant officer in question had long commanded the division, by whom he was regarded, in point of intelligence and military skill, as second only to Lord Wellington; or that his unremitting attention to the wants of the troops, secured for him, to the full, as much of their love as of their respect.

I will not waste time, by describing to you the manner in which I was received by my companions in arms, or by giving any outline of the conversation which drew us on from hour to hour, in continuation of our vigils. You can easily guess that that was not the least agreeable night of my military life; and that the necessity of causing our mattrasses to

be spread was not alluded to, till the last cup of wine left in the boraccio had been drained. But the wine was at length expended ; hints were dropped of an early parade on the morrow ; and we finally separated with a firm determination of bringing to a close, in the evening after, a conference thus prematurely interrupted.

Whether the fatigues of yesterday's march told heavily upon me, or the wine which I had swallowed over night acted as a narcotic, I cannot tell ; but when I awoke next morning, I found myself alone in the chamber. My comrades had both risen, and were gone abroad ; and though I felt that they acted kindly in not disturbing my slumbers, I was, nevertheless, chagrined at the idea that, on the very first morning of my arrival at headquarters, I should appear slothful. I accordingly arose in all haste, and went to the window : the sky was clear and bright, and the rain of the preceding day having been succeeded by a bracing frost, everything around wore an aspect widely different from that which it presented when, weary and half famished, and shivering in my saturated garments, I first arrived at my present habitation.

The roads, which then wore the appearance of mere tracks across a marsh, were now hard and firm ; and the face of the country, though, in general, bleak and desolate enough, was, at least, less bleak and less desolate than it seemed to be, when examined through the veil of a heavy and unintermitting shower. I saw, too, for the first time, that the brigade to which I was attached inhabited about half-a-dozen hovels, scattered at some distance the one from the other, on the north side of the Agueda ; and I beheld that romantic stream rolling in all the majesty of a swollen torrent, and chafing against the rough and precipitous rocks which formed its banks. Directly opposite to me stood the town of Ciudad Rodrigo, placed upon one of the three hills which alone break in upon the sameness of the plain, standing, even in its ruins, with an air of singular majesty above the widely extended flat, which on all sides begirt it. But the object which most forcibly attracted my attention, was the parade of the several corps of the division, which were already beginning to assemble. I knew not for what purpose this muster was going on : my fertile imagination readily conjured up a picture of advancing

columns of the enemy, and a threatened engagement; so I made all haste possible in completing my toilet, and hurried forth to take my station.

On reaching the parade ground, I heard that this was the day appointed for the funeral of General Craufurd, and that the whole of his division had been commanded to pay the last tribute of respect to his much honoured remains. The individual who communicated to me this fact, had been his aide-de-camp; and as he happened to be an old acquaintance of my own, he very readily complied with my entreaty to be made acquainted with all the circumstances which attended the death of his lamented chief. It appeared, that General Craufurd's division, having been appointed to storm the smaller breach, formed by the fall of a round tower, opposite to the convent of St. Francisco, advanced at the appointed hour, under its gallant leader, and made good, with, comparatively speaking, little loss, a lodgment on the summit of the rampart. Among the number of those, however, whose career of glory was then cut short, poor Craufurd himself happened to be included. He was at the head of the column, at once

directing and animating his people, when a musket ball took his left arm, and, penetrating into the side, lodged in his lungs. For a moment, he struggled, as it were, with the weakness of humanity, and strove to head his brave followers, as he had hitherto done; but the effort was fruitless. He failed, and fell back into the arms of one of the soldiers. He was instantly carried to the rear, where the medical attendants bled him twice, and he appeared to derive benefit from the operation. In the mean while, the contest was going on with great obstinacy, and my informant could not, of course, abandon it; but as soon as the town was carried, and everything like fighting ceased, he hurried off to attend the General. The latter was then in a heavy death-like slumber; into which, soon after the bleeding, he had fallen; and from which he did not awake till long after dawn on the 20th. But he awoke with no favourable symptoms about him; and it soon became evident, as well to the surgeons as to his friends who watched beside his pallet, that all hope of recovery was futile.

I have reason to believe that General Craufurd himself, from the instant of receiving his

wound, never entertained an idea of recovery. On the contrary, when General Stewart,† who remained with him like a brother, and his other attendants, would have flattered him by talking of future operations, he only shook his head, and replied in a feeble voice, that his futurity, at least upon earth, would be of short duration ; and so it proved to be. Little change took place during the 21st and 22nd ; he suffered, both then and previously, internal agony ; but on the 23rd, the pain abated, and his anxious friends fondly persuaded themselves, that this was a symptom of the recovery for which they wished, rather than hoped. The case was widely different : he spoke, indeed, from that moment, with greater composure and apparent ease ; but his conversation was now, what it had ever been, even during the paroxysms of his sufferings, of his wife and children. He repeatedly intreated his aide-de-camp to inform his wife, that “ he was sure they would meet in heaven ;” and that there was a Providence over all, which never yet forsook, and never would forsake the soldier’s widow and orphans. Thus

† Now Marquess of Londonderry.

passed the moments, till about two o'clock in the morning of the 24th; when, for the first time, since the night of the 19th, he fell into a slumber. From that slumber he never awoke, but, like an infant at the breast of its mother, he dozed calmly and beautifully into eternity.

I have said, that among the generals of division and brigade in the army, none were more beloved or more respected by the officers and men placed immediately under their command, than General Craufurd. In saying this, I did but meagre justice either to his merits, or to the good sense and correct judgment of the army at large. Of the place which he held in the estimation of the Commander-in-chief, it will be unnecessary to speak, when I mention that to Craufurd, though only a Brigadier-General, was entrusted the guidance of a division, more than all the rest requiring at its head an officer of activity of body and intelligence of mind. Craufurd, on every occasion, commanded the advance of the army in pursuits, its rear-guard in retreats, its out-posts when in position, and its detached corps, when such, by any chance, was needed; nor in any of these situations did he ever fail to

earn the decided approbation of Lord Wellington. This was known throughout the army; and the man himself was, in consequence, regarded as one of those who, should circumstances ever place him in a situation of distinct responsibility and trust, would unquestionably add to the renown which the British troops had already acquired. Under these circumstances, it was to be expected that the deepest sorrow would every where be felt when his premature death came to be known; and it was determined, in order to mark the sense entertained of his extraordinary merits as an officer and a man, that a sort of public funeral should be given to him.

I need not remind you, that when a man dies as poor Craufurd died, nobody dreams of keeping the corpse, for form's sake, any longer than the arrangements deemed necessary for its interment may require. As soon as the fatal issue of his illness became apparent, directions were given to the artificers to prepare his coffin, and he was laid in that, his last bed, on the evening of the same day on which his heroic spirit quitted the body. In the meanwhile, orders were issued directing the forms to be used in committing the sacred burthen to

the earth ; and it was in obedience to these orders, that his own favourite division appeared this morning under arms. Having advanced to the house where his mortal remains slumbered, the division proceeded on with arms reversed, between a double row of soldiers of the fifth division, who, with their muskets likewise pointing to the ground, lined the road on each side. This done, so as that the rearmost company of the division should line with the house itself, the troops halted, till the coffin, borne by six serjeant-majors, and having six field-officers as supporters, came forth. The word was given to march, the several bands striking up slow and mournful airs, and the coffin was followed, first by General Stewart, and the aide-de-camp of the deceased, as chief mourners, and then by Lord Wellington, General Castanos, Marshal Beresford, and a long train of staff and general officers. In this manner we proceeded along the road till we gained the very breach, in assaulting which the brave subject of our procession met his fate, where we found that a grave had been dug for him, and that he was destined to sleep, till the last trumpet should rouse him, on the spot where his career of

earthly glory had come to a close. Never have I beheld a more striking or melancholy spectacle. The regiment, being formed into close columns of battalions, took post as they best could, about the grave, towards which the coffin, headed by a chaplain, advanced. At this moment the military music ceased, and no sound could be heard except the voice of the clergyman, who faltered forth, rather than read, the solemn declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life." Arrived at the brink of the sepulchre the procession paused, and the shell was rested upon the ground ; and then I could distinctly perceive, that among the six rugged veterans who had borne it, there was not a dry eye, and that even of the privates who looked on, there were few who manifested not signs of sorrow, such as men are accustomed to exhibit only when they lose a parent or a child.

The few striking sentences having been read, which that most affecting of all rituals, the Funeral Service of the Church of England requires, the body was lowered into the grave, and "dust" was committed to dust, and "ashes to ashes." This part of the ceremony being concluded, there followed that salute, both of

artillery and musketry, which the rank of the deceased required ; and then, the corps being once more formed into marching order, filed back to their several cantonments. But the scene of deep melancholy which pervaded every breast during the continuance of the ceremony, could not wholly evaporate as soon as the ceremony itself came to a close. Even I, to whom the merits of the deceased were known only by common report, could not, all at once, shake off the painful impression which a contemplation of the real grief of others had produced ; and as I perceived no one to be more light-hearted than myself among all my acquaintances, I found no inducement to follow up the schemes of amusement which I had chalked out for myself during the preceding evening. It had been determined, that several of my friends should initiate me into the mysteries of warfare, by guiding me this day through the town and fortress of Rodrigo ; but the business of the morning was of a nature well calculated to strike at the root of all merely pleasurable arrangements, and the appointments, into which each and all had, with so much eagerness, entered only a few hours before, were either forgotten or disregarded.

30 *The Funeral of General Craufurd.*

Instead of visiting the town, we wandered about in little groups of two and three, during the remainder of the day, some in the immediate vicinity of their quarters, others along the margin of the Agueda; and we retired to our several billets in the evening, as melancholy and dejected as if each were mourning the loss of some much loved relative.

From the Morning Chronicle.

MONUMENT IN ST. PAUL'S TO MAJOR-GENERAL
ROBERT CRAUFURD.

ON the 21st of this month, an address was voted unanimously, in the House of Commons, to the Prince Regent, praying that a monument may be erected in St. Paul's to this illustrious officer, as a tribute of the nation's gratitude for his most brilliant services, and as a recorded proof of their deep regret at his loss. Mr. Perceval, on this occasion, expatiated in the warmest manner on the exalted merits and eminent qualities and services of General Craufurd ; and Lord Castlereagh seconded the motion in a most impressive speech. He extolled as much General Craufurd's private as his public virtues ; he described him as one of the first characters in the army ; he dwelt greatly on the magnanimity, firmness, tranquillity, and resignation, which he displayed to his end, conscious, from the first, that his wound was mortal ; and he observed, that the enthusiastic attachment which all the army

32 *Monument to General Craufurd.*

bore him, their poignant grief at his loss, and the illustrious Lord Wellington's sincere regard, esteem, and confidence, were sufficient to raise his character to a higher pitch of elevation than any words could reach.

FINIS.







